



Our ref: THAG2  
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Date: 26 March 2020

**Dr A Leonard**  
Executive Director of Business Operations  
Town Hall  
Bexhill-on-Sea  
TN39 3JX

Via email

Dear Sir/Madam

## **UPDATE: COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS**

I am writing to you with a further update on the Strategy and Planning Service.

While the planning service is an essential service offered by RDC in the context of the current pandemic, it is not regarded as a critical service and unfortunately there are likely to be future delays. Nevertheless, we continue to strive to provide the best service we can at this difficult time.

Planning staff at Rother District Council are following latest Government advice and by the close of today the planning service will be 100% homeworking.

As a result of the Prime Minister's address on Sunday on the freedom of movement, we have now ceased all site visits (including the posting of site notices\*). This introduces significant challenges for officers in assessing the impact of a proposal, and where possible, officers will use Google Earth to help, or if it is a repeat application using the knowledge from previous visits. Inevitably this will create further delays in the process and officers are encouraged to discuss these issues with applicants as we move forward.

*\*Please note that decisions cannot be issued until such time as an application has been subject to the legally required public consultation (display of a site notice).*

There are also a small number of current applications in the system which have been called to committee by members, as all committees have been suspended at RDC (initially to the end of April) officers again are encouraged to discuss these issues with the relevant applicant/agent.

Finally, all face to face meetings are in the process of being cancelled.

I will give you further updates as and when circumstances change

We appreciate your continued patience during this difficult time. For the latest updates on Coronavirus and any disruption to services please visit [www.rother.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.rother.gov.uk/coronavirus)

Yours faithfully

Head of Service – Strategy & Planning